Amendments to the Claims:

1.    (Currently Amended)  A method, comprising:

enforcing a charging policy at a network element, wherein the charging policy is to be applied to a data flow reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context comprising a plurality of data flows including the data flow, ~~with~~ wherein each data flow of the plurality of data flows ~~being~~ is distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, wherein the set of flow parameters includes a flow identifier that distinguishes flows having a common destination address, and wherein said charging policy defines charging rules for the data flow;

observing the data packets reaching said network element; ~~the data packets including at least one flow parameter, wherein the at least one flow parameter includes a flow identifier, and wherein the at least one flow parameter indicates the charging policy to be enforced on the data flow;~~

detecting the data flow from flow parameters included in the data packets, wherein the flow parameters indicate the charging policy to be enforced on the data flow;

mapping the data packets to the data flow in accordance with the at least one flow parameter included in a respective data packet;

matching the data flow to the charging policy; and

applying said charging policy to said data flow to generate charging information.

2.    (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

causing the generated charging information to be forwarded to a charging system of a communication network.

3.    (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, wherein the enforcing is performed upon start-up of the network element.

4.    (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, wherein the enforcing is performed upon activation of the packet data protocol context.

5.     (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 4, wherein the enforcing is performed dynamically during a life-time of the packet data protocol context.

6.     (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
initializing data volume counters upon enforcing said charging policy.

7.     (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of data flows of the packet data protocol context are Internet Protocol (IP) based packet data flows, and said flow parameters comprise at least one of an IP header field, a transport header field, and an application level information.

8.     (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said charging policy comprises at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication.

9.     (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, further comprising:
creating a plurality of charging policies including the charging policy to be enforced, each charging policy of the plurality of charging policies comprising at least the one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication;
selecting the charging policy based on offered services and subscriber information; and
causing the charging policy to be distributed to the network element to be enforced at the network element for charging of data reaching said  network element during the packet data protocol context.

10.     (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 9, wherein said charging policy is selected for a type of said network element.

11.     (Currently Amended)  An apparatus comprising a processor configured to cause the apparatus to:
enforce a charging policy at a network element to be applied to a data flow reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context

comprising a plurality of data flows including the data flow, ~~with~~ wherein each data flow of the plurality of data flows ~~being~~ is distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, wherein the set of flow parameters includes a flow identifier that distinguishes flows having a common destination address, and wherein said charging policy defines charging rules per data flow of the plurality of data flows;

observe said data packets reaching said network element, ~~the data packets including at least one flow parameter, wherein the at least one flow parameter includes a flow identifier, and wherein the at least one flow parameter indicates the charging policy to be enforced on the data flow~~;

detect the data flow from flow parameters included in the data packets, wherein the flow parameters indicate the charging policy to be enforced on the data flow;

map the data packets to the data flow in accordance with the at least one flow parameter included in a respective data packet;

match the data flow to the charging policy;

apply said charging policy to said data flows; and

generate charging information, in response to applying said charging policy.

12.   (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the apparatus to cause the generated charging information to be forwarded to a charging system of a communication network.

13.   (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the apparatus to be responsive to a start-up of the network element to perform the enforcing.

14.   (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the apparatus to be responsive to activation of the packet data protocol context to perform the enforcing.

15.   (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the processor configured to cause the apparatus to enforce the charging policy is further configured

to cause the apparatus to dynamically enforce during a life-time of the packet data protocol context.

16.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the apparatus to initialize data volume counters and/or time counters responsive to enforcing said charging policy.

17.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of data flows of the packet data protocol context are Internet Protocol (IP) based packet data flows, and said flow parameters comprise at least one of an IP header field, a transport header field, and an application level information.

18.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said charging policy comprises at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication.

19.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the apparatus to:
create a plurality of charging policies including the charging policy to be enforced, each charging policy of the plurality of charging policies comprising at least the one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication;
select the charging policy based on offered services and subscriber information; and
cause the charging policy to be distributed to said network element, with the charging policy to be enforced at said network element for charging of data reaching said network element during a packet data protocol context.

20.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said charging policy is selected for a type of said network element.

21.    (Currently Amended)  An apparatus, comprising:

enforcing means configured to enforce a charging policy at a network element to be applied to a data flow reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context comprising a plurality of data flows including the data flow, ~~with~~ wherein each data flow of the plurality of data flows ~~being~~ is distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, wherein the set of flow parameters includes a flow identifier that distinguishes flows having a common destination address, and wherein said charging policy defines charging rules for the data flow;

observation means configured to observe said data packets reaching said network element;~~, the data packets each including at least one flow parameter, wherein the at least one flow parameter includes a flow identifier, and wherein the at least one flow parameter indicates the charging policy to be enforced on the data flow, the observation means being further configured to detect the data flow from flow parameters included in the data packets,~~

detecting means configured to detect the data flow from flow parameters included in the data packets, wherein the flow parameters indicate the charging policy to be enforced on the data flow;

mapping means configured to map each of the data packets to the data flow in accordance with the at least one flow parameter included in a respective data packet;

matching means configured to match said data flows to the charging policy;

application means configured to apply said charging policy to said data flow; and

generation means, responsive to said application means, configured to generate charging information.

22.-24. (Cancelled)

25.    (Previously Presented)  The method according to claim 1, wherein observing the data packets includes observing the data packets reaching said network element, the data packets including the at least one flow parameter, the at least one flow parameter including a flow identifier and a destination address, wherein the flow identifier does not include the destination address.

26.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the processor configured to  cause the apparatus to observe the data packets includes being configured to cause the apparatus to observe the data packets reaching said network element, the data packets including the at least one flow parameter, the at least one flow parameter including a flow identifier and a destination address, wherein the flow identifier does not include the destination address.

27.     (Previously Presented)  The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the observation means configured to observe the data packets includes being configured to observe the data packets reaching said network element, the data packets including the at least one flow parameter, the at least one flow parameter including a flow identifier and a destination address, wherein the flow identifier does not include the destination address.

28.     (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

selecting the charging policy based on the at least one flow parameter, including the flow identifier, of the data packets; and

metering of the data packets of the data flow to generate a flow record comprising information about the data flow;

wherein applying said charging policy includes applying said charging policy to the flow record to generate the charging information for the data flow.

29.     (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the apparatus to:

select the charging policy based on the at least one flow parameter, including the flow identifier, of the data packets; and

meter the data packets of the data flow to generate a flow record comprising information about the data flow; and

wherein the processor configured to cause the apparatus to apply said charging policy includes being configured to cause the apparatus to apply said charging policy to the flow record to generate the charging information for the data flow.

30.     (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising:

means for selecting the charging policy based on the at least one flow parameter, including the flow identifier, of the data packets; and

means for metering of the data packets of the data flow to generate a flow record comprising information about the data flow;

wherein the application means configured to apply said charging policy includes being configured to apply said charging policy to the flow record to generate the charging information for the data flow.